

**CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE  
ON DISARMAMENT**

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20 August 1964  
ENGLISH

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 20 August 1964, at 10.30 a.m.

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Chairman:            Mr. M. KLUSAK            (Czechoslovakia)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA do LAGO  
Mr. E. HOSANNAH

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV  
Mr. G. GHELEV  
Mr. G. YANKOV  
Mr. I. BOEV

Burma:

U SAIN BWA  
U HTOON SHEIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS  
Mr. S.F. RAE  
Mr. R.M. TAIT  
Mr. C.J. MARSHALL

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. KLUSAK  
Mr. V. VAJNAR  
Mr. A. MIKULIN  
Mr. J. CHMELA

Ethiopia:

Lij Mikael IMRU  
Ato S. TEFERRA

India:

Mr. R.K. NEHRU  
Mr. S.U. PURUSHOTTAM  
Mr. K. NARENDRANATH

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI  
Mr. R. GUIDOTTI  
Mr. S. AVETTA  
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO

Mr. M. TELLO

Mr. J. MERCADO

Nigeria:

Mr. L.C.N. OBI

Poland:

Mr. M. LOBODYCZ

Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

Mr. H. SOKALSKI

Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU

Mr. E. GLASER

Mr. N. ECOBESCU

Mr. C. UNGUREANU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL

Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD

Mr. U. ERICSSON

Mr. B. VEGESACK

Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics:

Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN

Mr. L.I. MENDELYEVICH

Mr. M.V. ANTIAISOV

Mr. I.M. PALENYKH

United Arab Republic:

Mr. A.F. HASSAN

Mr. S. EL FATATRI

Mr. M. KASSEM

Mr. A.A. SALAM

United Kingdom:

Mr. J.G. TAHOURDIN

Mr. A.J. WILLIAMS

Miss E.J.M. RICHARDSON

Mr. R.C. BEETHAM

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United States of America:

Mr. C.H. TIMBERLAKE

Mr. D.S. MACDONALD

Mr. R.A. MARTIN

Miss M.R. de GUNZBURG

Special Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative  
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): I declare open the 209th meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Li j IMRU (Ethiopia): I intend to devote my observations this morning, as our agenda in part permits, to two subjects: that of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, and the question of convening a conference for the purpose of prohibiting the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. My delegation considers that the questions raised by both those subjects are ones on which agreement should not be difficult to attain. The implementation of those measures would not involve intricate and complicated verification operations touching upon sensitive defence installations, for which the Powers are not yet ready. The achievement of both those measures would reinforce and assist the continuing search for agreement on more difficult and delicate measures of disarmament, since they could generate a better atmosphere for negotiations and be a source of confidence among nations. Further, they would prepare the way for peaceful uses of nuclear energy for which the world is in such great need.

As far as the question of a comprehensive test ban is concerned, it is evident that an uncompleted task remains unsatisfactory. All the effects of the present ban, like the Treaty itself (ENDC/100/Rev.1), are partial. The partial test-ban Treaty, although it has contributed to improving the atmosphere of negotiations, has, we fear, not led to further disarmament measures within a reasonable interval of time; nor have any significant political settlements promoting peace and reducing tensions among nations been forthcoming. Indeed, recent events in many parts of the world are a source of concern and alarm to all those who seek in disarmament measures a means of reducing the areas of conflict and encouraging peaceful co-operation among all nations and peoples. The less progress we make in disarmament negotiations, the gloomier the international situation looks, with limited conflicts threatening to engulf the world.

This year's meetings of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament have so far proved sterile; and, if the remaining weeks do not yield results, observers might well be inclined to think, not unjustifiably, that we are still basking in the afterglow of the partial test-ban Treaty. The Treaty has not even been rounded out by a comprehensive ban on all tests. As long as the ban already achieved is partial, the

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future of the Treaty is threatened, since it holds the seed of its own destruction in the reservations it embodies and the partiality it favours; for, if a few countries continue the nuclear arms race by testing underground, others might well claim the right to test in the prohibited environments.

The lack of interest in completing the nuclear test-ban Treaty cannot be entirely explained by the degree of complacency that it has generated. The problem of how to verify that a ban on underground tests is being respected is a difficulty which we have not made any serious attempt to surmount in this year's negotiations. The Sub-Committee on nuclear tests has remained inactive. The technical reports on the progress of detection and identification techniques, for which we have been very grateful in the past, have not been available this year. Yet we cannot rule out the possibility that much progress has taken place in this field. A little improvement in the means of detecting and identifying underground nuclear explosions could no doubt bridge the narrow gap that divided the two sides in the negotiations of last year, and an acceptable measure of inspection might be devised which would ensure the carrying out of a ban on underground tests.

We must not forget that it was specifically in regard to underground nuclear tests that the positions of both sides were closest on the subject of inspection. Last year we missed our opportunity in this matter; but it is even more necessary today that a relatively simple method of inspection, such as is feasible in respect of underground nuclear tests, should first be agreed and tried before complicated verification schemes are mooted.

If an agreement is not forthcoming in this matter, it is difficult for my delegation to believe that more complex methods have any chance of success. The principle of inspection and verification has been accepted by both sides, but the extent, type and methods of inspection are still a subject of protracted discussion. In time, as tensions diminish and mutual confidence is based on more solid ground, there will be no pressing need for detailed verification schemes; but today it is necessary to agree on and try simple inspection measures that may generate trust and render more complicated inspection measures safer to accept.

It is precisely in the field of underground tests that we have the opportunity to implement such a simple inspection measure and be in a position to acquire essential experience in carrying out international inspection. This question acquires more importance with the passing of time, for every disarmament measure is vitiated by a lack

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of agreement on how to verify its implementation. The Ethiopian delegation urges the nuclear Powers not to miss this opportunity but to continue negotiations with a view to fulfilling the promise given in the preamble to the partial test-ban Treaty.

In accordance with the agenda for today's meeting, we wish to discuss United Nations General Assembly resolution 1909 (XVIII) on the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. The General Assembly has requested our Committee to study this question and report its findings to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly. The General Assembly has already expressed itself in favour of a ban on the use of nuclear weapons. This Committee's task is clearly, therefore, to examine the possibilities of reaching agreement on the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing such a convention, and to recommend the appropriate time at which such a conference could usefully be convened. It is self-evident that such a conference would require the support of all States, and especially of those States which possess or are on the way to possessing nuclear weapons.

It is difficult to divorce completely questions of substance from purely procedural aspects in the consideration of the subject before us. It is therefore worth remembering that this matter has been extensively discussed in the General Assembly of the United Nations for a number of years. It has been a subject of consultations between the Secretary-General and Governments of Member States of the United Nations; and the urgent need to safeguard the human race from the terrible physical and spiritual catastrophe of nuclear war is accepted by all governments consulted by the Secretary-General. It is necessary that the international community should take all necessary measures to protect mankind from the dangers of nuclear war until such time as nuclear weapons themselves shall have been completely eliminated -- and that for the following reasons.

First of all, it is absolutely necessary that there should be recognition of the vital fact that nuclear war is not a conflict between combatants but a war against humanity, its cultural heritage and everything it holds of value. It is a weapon of mass destruction which does not discriminate between combatants and innocent civilians, between installations of war and factories of peace, between social services and arms depots, between museums and missile sites. It is a blind force, the unleashing of which cannot be reasonably controlled and which leads to the destruction of both good and evil. It imposes unlimited damage upon the victim, which is morally untenable, and thus

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leads to the moral bankruptcy of the user. It ruins a people by introducing diseases that can affect unborn generations, thus visiting the sins of one generation upon innocent succeeding generations. It threatens the complete destruction of some peoples whose concentrated populations make their regions, their economies and their means of livelihood vulnerable.

It is a tribute to the wisdom of the leaders of the nuclear Powers that they do not put exclusive trust in nuclear weapons in order to safeguard their various interests. There is a deeper understanding today of the destructive power of those weapons and the wider dangers involved in their employment. We trust that this fund of wisdom will not be exhausted. However, by prohibiting their use by means of an international convention we should be exerting a universal moral pressure against nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. This is an obligation we cannot neglect.

Secondly, since the United Nations General Assembly declared on 24 November 1961 that "The use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons ... is contrary to the rules of international law and to the laws of humanity" (A/RES/1653(XVI)), the flicker of light and hope shed by the partial test-ban Treaty and the slow and difficult negotiations undertaken by the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament have not arrested the arms race. Stockpiles of nuclear weapons are mounting, nuclear weapon vehicles are being perfected, "over-kill" capacities have become overwhelming, and the problems attendant upon the prevention of further dissemination of nuclear weapons are becoming intractable. Technological and economic progress and the lack of a strict agreement on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons are making it possible for more Powers to acquire those weapons of mass destruction, thus diminishing the margins of safety. New possessors of these weapons may lack the sense of responsibility which, we are happy to say, characterizes the present possessors of these weapons. With the passing of time the danger greatly increases, and we slowly edge towards the nuclear abyss. In these dangerous circumstances, is it not vital to take all precautionary measures to protect humanity and its rich and varied heritage from the hazard of nuclear catastrophe? The prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons by an international convention is one such precautionary measure.



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Thirdly, in the protracted negotiations undertaken by our Committee to formulate a disarmament treaty acceptable to all sides, the earlier we achieve a ban on the use of nuclear weapons the better, because of the improvement it would bring about in the atmosphere of the Conference, thus helping the course of negotiations. We do not harbour the illusion that a convention prohibiting nuclear weapons would by itself be a sufficient safeguard against the danger of nuclear annihilation. It is only through a decisive break-through in the disarmament negotiations by which nuclear weapons and their means of delivery would be reduced and eventually eliminated from the arsenals of the Powers that effective security could be gained from the dangers inherent in these weapons of mass destruction.

To secure a safer world through realistic and effective measures of disarmament is our principal task in this Committee; but the discussions of the past two years have clearly demonstrated that this is a laborious and complicated task -- though by no means a hopeless one. Success depends not only upon the practical possibilities but also on the political will of governments to undertake disarmament measures, on a long-term improvement in the relations between States and between peoples, and on a deeper appreciation of the interest and concern of every nation. Apprehensions that have developed in the long process of a nation's history cannot be relieved overnight. To achieve any success in concrete disarmament negotiations, steps that help to reduce the legitimate concern of other States should be followed. Above all, sensitive suspicions and fears born out of dire historical experience must be gradually allayed and a spirit of trust established.

A convention that prohibits the use of nuclear weapons will contribute to those objectives. A firm moral obligation not to use nuclear weapons will underscore the need to arrive at an agreement to reduce and eventually destroy those weapons. A ban on the use of nuclear weapons is obviously not a substitute measure but a preliminary step preparing the ground for their total destruction. A posture based on a total commitment to use nuclear weapons is not conducive to their reduction and eventual elimination, and is diametrically opposed to the spirit of disarmament negotiations now prevailing in our Committee.

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Fourthly, the longer the use of nuclear weapons remains unprohibited by international convention -- and therefore, by implication, tolerated --, the greater the number of countries which will attempt to find security and protection in dependence upon them. Nations will be tempted to hold the false view that great-Power status would be acquired by the possession of such weapons. Those weapons, in turn, might absorb a huge proportion of the nations' resources and to some extent might deplete their conventional defences and make them completely and solely dependent on nuclear arms. Thus they would become unreliable partners in the task of building a better and safer world. A clear undertaking by the international community to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons will no doubt have a salutary effect upon the armament programmes of many States and will undermine the kind of false legitimacy which nuclear weapons would otherwise acquire.

Finally, from the first days of the discovery of atomic energy its utilization has been mainly directed towards weapon purposes. That is a result of weaknesses and limitations inherent in human nature and in the societies that human beings establish. But man's vision is unlimited, and it is time that we saw our human needs in wider terms and in the global context. In the past twenty years we have devoted nuclear energy mainly to armament purposes. Is it not high time that this orientation was radically changed and atomic energy made to serve the innumerable and varied needs of men and women throughout the world? Should we not now make a serious start towards bridging the gap between the highly-developed and the developing nations by making more extensive use of nuclear energy, thus alleviating deep causes of tension that would otherwise remain a dangerous heritage of our troubled world? Nuclear energy should be used for human welfare and not for human destruction. It should be a blessing and not a curse. It should be a bond of friendship and creative activity among peoples, and not a bond of mutual terror.

For the afore-mentioned reasons the Ethiopian delegation is convinced that the time is ripe for the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee to recommend to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly the convening of an international conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons; we urge that such a recommendation be made. That is in line with the responsibility of every nation to minimize the risks which nuclear weapons present to mankind. That is an obligation we cannot afford to avoid.

Mr. TAHOURDIN (United Kingdom): The subject on our agenda this morning -- resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning the work of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee -- could allow our discussion to range over a wide field. In my own remarks today, however, I should like to concentrate on only two of those resolutions. In that I am following the example set this morning by the representative of Ethiopia. I have listened with considerable interest to his statement. As will be seen, there was much in it with which my Government has considerable sympathy.

I turn now to the two resolutions to which I have referred. The first is resolution 1910 (XVIII) (ENDC/139), adopted at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly. It is concerned with the need for a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

I must begin by emphasizing the importance which my Government attaches to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. That has consistently been United Kingdom policy. We see such a treaty as completing the agreement reached last year in Moscow when the partial test-ban Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) was signed. It would be a fulfilment of the intention we then proclaimed of continuing our negotiations until we could all agree to ban every means of testing nuclear weapons and so halt their further terrible development.

A comprehensive test-ban treaty must, however, contain adequate provisions for ensuring that it is loyally being carried out. In our view this would still involve some on-site verification. Regarding that need I would suggest, with great respect, that in the face of the complicated technical questions involved some misunderstanding seems to have arisen in the minds of certain recent speakers in our debates. There seems to be an impression that there exists a level, or "threshold", at which it is possible by existing national means not only to detect but also to identify with certainty underground events of a given kiloton magnitude. But, according to our scientific advice, that is unfortunately still not the case. We are doing all we can to increase our seismological knowledge. But, as the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Mr. Butler, said in the House of Commons on 13 July:

"I am advised that it would be very difficult to define a threshold above which scientists would be prepared to assert that all underground tests could be conclusively identified, unless it were so high as to permit the great majority of tests to continue." (Official Report, Vol. 698, No. 141, col.164)

(Mr. Tahourdin, United Kingdom)

This misunderstanding or confusion to which I have referred may have arisen because we are indeed able to detect -- and I would emphasize the word "detect" -- an increasing number of underground events by purely national means. But this is very far from meaning that we can identify their nature without some on-site verification. In other words, without additional verification we could not be certain whether an underground event which we might have detected was a natural phenomenon or the result of an underground test. That is the reason for which we maintain the need for some inspection and verification, although we have done our best to limit this and make it as little intrusive as possible.

It is disappointing that in this respect our Soviet colleagues seem to have taken a backward step from their earlier position when they were prepared to accept a limited amount of on-site verification. They have argued, and will doubtless argue again today, that Soviet scientific knowledge now makes on-site verification unnecessary. But they have not told us how. Consequently it is disappointing also that they are still not prepared to pursue with us the possibility of holding expert talks between scientists of both sides in the hope of establishing an agreed verification basis for a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

For our part, we remain as ready as ever to conduct such talks, and I would express the hope that the Government of the Soviet Union might reconsider its attitude on this point. As the United Kingdom Prime Minister said in the House of Commons on 12 March:

"There have been no scientific advances that would justify us in proposing a comprehensive treaty without adequate provision for effective on-site verification ... there have been no new scientific advances to justify a change of attitude. It would be helpful if Russian scientists got together with United States and British scientists and tried to thrash these matters out and come to an agreed formula." (Official Report, Vol. 691, No. 72, Cols. 662, 663)

If they were to do that, it would be a most useful step towards reaching agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty -- an objective which is shared by all members of the Conference and indeed by the peoples of the whole world. I fear that until they are prepared to do so it will be impossible for us, despite all our sense of urgency, to report progress to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(Mr. Tahourdin, United Kingdom)

The second General Assembly resolution which I should like to discuss this morning is resolution 1909 (XVIII) (ENDC/139), in which this Conference was asked to study the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.

I think it is known to all my colleagues that the United Kingdom was not able to vote for that resolution when it was laid before the General Assembly last year. I should like to emphasize that in voting against the resolution we did not wish to minimize the motives of those who had sponsored it; we recognize that those motives were of the highest. But this is a field in which, if we are to make true progress, we must constrain ourselves to be severely practical in our approach. Unfortunately, idealism is not enough. As my Government stated in its reply to the Secretary-General's letter of 2 January 1962 concerning this question:

"Her Majesty's Government strongly sympathize with all efforts to remove the danger of nuclear war and understand the ... natural and justified wish to free the world of this danger.

"Unfortunately, however, Her Majesty's Government do not consider that this danger can be eliminated by a simple prohibition of the use of the weapons concerned."

(A/5174, Annex II, p. 76).

Let me recall briefly our reasons for taking that view. First, we must all recognize that so long as these weapons exist, and indeed so long as the danger of war exists, we should delude ourselves if we refused to acknowledge that the danger of nuclear war exists also. If, despite all our efforts to the contrary, we were to be faced with the dreadful possibility of an outbreak of war between the nuclear Powers, it would be vain, it seems to us, to imagine that a prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons would be the deciding factor. The decision whether or not to use nuclear weapons in that terrible situation would not be governed, or even mainly governed, by the existence of such a declaration alone. I think that all of us seated here must acknowledge that such a decision would in fact be taken as a result of a calculation in regard to the intentions of the other side.

(Mr. Tahourdin, United Kingdom)

At this point I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the similar view expressed by Mr. Khrushchev in a press interview on 8 September 1961. This is what he then said:

"... if atomic weapons are preserved and if war is unleashed, it will be a thermonuclear war. Therefore, world peace must be assured not by undertakings to refrain from the use of nuclear weapons" -- and I hope the Committee will note that phrase -- "but by radical solution of the cardinal issues".

Mr. Khrushchev concluded:

"And the best guarantee of peace is the destruction of armaments and the elimination of armies, in other words, disarmament." (New York Times, 8 September 1961, p. 11)

That is an exceptionally clear statement of Mr. Khrushchev's view. Indeed, it is a position which he has maintained consistently. On 16 August, in the account of his interview with Lord Thompson, the proprietor of the Sunday Times newspaper, Mr. Khrushchev is reported to have said when asked about the possibility of an agreement to ban the use of nuclear weapons -- and I quote the Sunday Times report:

"The trouble is the losing side will always use nuclear weapons in the last resort to avoid defeat. If a wrestler has been gripped by the throat in the last minute of life he won't stick to ethics. If a man thinks he's going to die he'll take any steps."

Mr. Khrushchev's position is shared by my Government, which agrees that the only sure way to remove the danger of nuclear war is by general and complete disarmament. I should add, however, that my delegation not only thinks that such a declaration would be ineffective, because unenforceable; we also fear that, however well-intentioned, it might in fact prove positively dangerous. The existence of such a declaration might breed a false impression that aggressive action could be undertaken without risk of nuclear war. If such an impression were to gain ground, international security would be impaired in a highly dangerous way.

In concluding, I should like to remind the Committee that my Government has, of course, like all other Members of the United Nations, undertaken in the Charter to refrain from the threat or the use of force. In its reply to the Secretary-General to which I have just referred, it solemnly repeated its assurance that it will not use any weapons at its disposal, either nuclear or otherwise, for purposes of aggression.

(Mr. Tahourdin, United Kingdom)

I am sure that all of us round this table share the sincere desire of the sponsors of the resolution that this terrible threat of nuclear war should be removed. But I would repeat once more our belief that this must be done through general and complete disarmament, and I would express the hope that we can all devote, and indeed intensify, our efforts to this end.

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): I should now like to speak as representative of Czechoslovakia.

The eighteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted several resolutions which directly relate to the tasks of our Committee and call upon it to consider certain problems. In accordance with those resolutions the Committee has so far considered the problem of general and complete disarmament as well as some collateral measures. Therefore we consider fully justified the recommendation of the co-Chairmen that some of our meetings should be devoted to the discussion of questions that were the subject of other resolutions of the United Nations.

In this connexion I should like to state briefly our point of view in regard to the problem put forward in the resolution sponsored by the Ethiopian delegation and adopted at the eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly: that is, in regard to the proposal to convene a conference for the signing of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons (A/RES/1909(XVIII)).

We consider the idea of convening a conference for the signing of such a convention a very valuable one. An international convention based on the principles contained in the resolution sponsored by a group of countries of Africa and Asia and adopted at the sixteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/1652(XVI)) would undoubtedly have a positive influence not only on the general atmosphere in relations among States but also on further negotiations on disarmament problems. It would have a direct bearing also on the basic task of our Committee - the question of general and complete disarmament. Even before the achievement of agreement on this pivotal question, the use of nuclear weapons would be prohibited by a rule of international law, and this would result in creating more favourable preconditions for the solution of one of the most important and difficult problems of general and complete disarmament.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

The usefulness and urgency of definite measures in the field of nuclear weapons which would contribute towards reducing the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war are now recognized and stressed by everyone. The point of view of the Czechoslovak delegation in this regard has already been explained here at sufficient length. We welcome and support all proposals which, if implemented, are likely to lead to this goal.

Not least among these proposals is, in our opinion, the proposal to sign a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons. The importance of such a convention, as has been extensively and aptly shown by the representative of Ethiopia in his statement today, would lie above all in the fact that States would assume an obligation under international law not to use nuclear weapons. The assumption of such an obligation would be a confirmation of the political position of the governments concerned in the matter of principle, and would testify to their willingness to bring about the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within the framework of general and complete disarmament.

At the same time I should like to point out that we by no means overrate the importance of such a measure. We do not consider it to be a panacea which could free mankind forever from the menace of nuclear war. We have no idealistic illusions; the United Kingdom representative can be sure of that. We fully realize that this menace can be done away with once and for all only through general and complete disarmament, through the elimination of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of their manufacture. But so long as no agreement is reached in regard to this radical solution, so long as nuclear weapons exist and their manufacture continues, the prohibition of their use could help towards improving the situation.

The fact that the proposed convention would not do away for ever with the menace of nuclear war cannot be an obstacle or argument against signing it. After all, other collateral measures under consideration in our Committee, as well as the measures agreed upon last year and in the current year, have an equally limited effect, yet no one doubts their importance and usefulness as steps leading to a relaxation of tension and an improvement in the international atmosphere.



(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

In comparison with other collateral measures which have been suggested, the proposal for the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons offers the best prospects for the achievement of agreement. A point in its favour is, for example, the fact that in connexion with the proposed convention no question at all arises of any disturbance of the existing balance of forces, which -- as the negotiations so far have shown -- is a serious obstacle to the adoption of a number of measures which have been proposed. Acceptance of the convention would not necessitate carrying out any measures in regard to existing nuclear weapons and their manufacture. The proposed convention would in no way give rise to problems of control. It would boil down to the assumption by the signatory States of an obligation which by its very nature does not require any control or inspection.

It is perfectly obvious that the convention could in no way endanger the security of, or cause any detriment to, the interests of any State whatsoever. Therefore we consider it to be an absolutely right inference that as a result of the conclusion of such a convention no one would lose anything but, on the contrary, everyone would gain.

Nevertheless, despite all these circumstances, in the past and in particular at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly, and as is evident today as well, we have encountered and are still encountering objections to the conclusion of such a convention. One of these objections, for instance, is the allegation that, since the United Nations Charter prohibits the use or threat of force in any form, a special convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons is superfluous and would merely be a repetition of a prohibition that already exists and is still valid. That objection has been refuted by the actual development of events, by the realities of the present day. Of course, nobody will dispute the fact that the menace of nuclear war really exists. This fact alone demonstrates sufficiently clearly the soundness of the proposal for the conclusion of a convention which would prohibit the use of nuclear weapons and would thus create a moral obstacle, based on international law, against nuclear war breaking out.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

In reply to the objection that it would be superfluous to reaffirm the obligations deriving from the Charter of the United Nations, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Spaak, made a very apt statement at the eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly in connexion with the proposal for the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty States (ENDC/77). He said among other things:

"We are told that ... /the conclusion of such a pact/ would not add anything, that we already have the United Nations Charter. That is true. But it is never useless to reaffirm principles which have already been accepted in international relations." (A/PV.1233, provisional, p.59-60)

The opponents of the signing of a convention also put forward the objection that a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would legalize the use of other types of weapons, which, they say, would be contrary to the Charter of the United Nations. We think that the artificiality and unconvincing nature of that objection are self-evident. From the fact that the proposed convention would apply only to the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons it is impossible to draw the conclusion that it would legalize the use of the remaining non-nuclear weapons and would thus be in contradiction with the general prohibition of the use of force, as stipulated in the United Nations Charter. Such a conclusion would be absolutely erroneous. After all, the existence and validity of a general rule prohibiting the use of force cannot be affected or weakened by another rule specifying concretely a certain aspect of it, in this case prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

Other objections that have been put forward against the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons are likewise without any foundation and cannot refute the fact that the signing of such a convention would be in keeping with the interests of the peace-loving peoples of the whole world. For this reason we consider that nothing should stand in the way of achieving agreement to conclude such a convention, since the only condition on which it depends is a political decision of principle, the willingness of the governments concerned to assume an obligation not to use nuclear weapons.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

It was in view of these circumstances that the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, in its reply of 27 March 1962 (A/5174, Annex II, p.17) to the letter of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on this subject, expressed its full support for the proposal to convene a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. We maintain the same position at the present time. We think that the work of our Committee should contribute towards removing the obstacles which have so far prevented the fulfilment of this proposal, and that it should give an impulse to the convening of the proposed conference.

I should also like to deal briefly with a question which has been the focus of attention during the past few weeks in our discussions on the problem of collateral measures: namely, the question of the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons. There is obviously no need to repeat the reasons why it is necessary to take effective measures against the further spread of nuclear weapons. All delegations in our Committee have expressed themselves -- at least in words -- in favour of taking such measures. The necessity and urgency of doing so has been stressed a good many times in numerous international documents, including several resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations. At our meeting of 13 August the representative of the United Arab Republic, Mr. Hassan, recalled (ENDC/PV.207, p.5) the resolution recently adopted by the Conference of Heads of Governments of African States, in which all the participants declared their readiness to sign, under the aegis of the United Nations, an international treaty renouncing the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the acquisition of control over them. We welcomed that declaration, which is in complete accordance with the position adopted by the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in this regard.

We listened with great attention to the interesting statement made by the representative of the United Arab Republic, Mr. Hassan, at the aforementioned 207th meeting of the Committee, which testified to his well-founded, lively interest in the solution of this question. The proposals put forward by Mr. Hassan in this connexion are a further example of the initiative of the United Arab Republic and of its constant endeavour to contribute towards the solution of important international problems, and, in our opinion, they deserve careful and detailed study and appreciation by all delegations. Our delegation is giving the utmost attention to the study of these proposals.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

The discussion that has taken place so far has fully confirmed that practically the only obstacle now preventing the achievement of agreement on this question is the plan for the creation of a NATO multilateral nuclear force. The delegations of the socialist countries have cited many facts showing that that plan is blatantly at variance with the desire to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, and that it would give access to those weapons precisely to those forces which have already twice during this century plunged mankind into the abyss of a world war: namely, the West German militarists and revenge-seekers.

Our cogent objections to the creation of a multilateral nuclear force are also being heeded to an ever-increasing extent, as we see, by the representatives of the non-aligned countries in our Committee. This is shown, for instance, by the statement made on 23 July by the representative of Mexico, Mr. Gomez Robledo, who also expressed in this connexion serious concern about the consequences to which the creation of a multilateral nuclear force would lead, since other nuclear Powers might start creating similar forces (ENDC/PV.201, p.21). In his statement of 13 August Mr. Hassan was also compelled to point out with regret that "the way towards an appropriate international agreement has been blocked by a sudden obstacle: the multilateral nuclear force." (ENDC/PV.207, p.7)

As regards the problem itself of the multilateral nuclear force, the Czechoslovak delegation has already analyzed in its previous interventions a number of statements made by leading personalities in the NATO countries, from which it appears quite clearly that within the framework of the multilateral nuclear force nuclear weapons and their means of delivery would be common property and would be under the joint control of the countries participating in the creation of this force. Such joint possession and control cannot mean anything else but giving access to nuclear weapons to still more countries.

The delegations of the Western countries try to prove that within the framework of the multilateral nuclear force there would be adequate guarantees that these weapons could be used only with the consent of the United States of America -- guarantees which would preclude their misuse by any member State. That such guarantees would be useless and unreliable has been very clearly confirmed by recent events relating to Cyprus and by the actions of the Turkish Government, as the representative of the Soviet Union reminded us on 13 August (ibid., pp.32, 33).

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

The use of NATO resources for the particular purposes of individual member States is not, of course, an exception in the history of that bloc, but on the contrary is practised fairly often. The results of such a practice have been experienced, for instance, by the heroic people of Algeria during the years of their arduous struggle against the yoke of the French colonialists. There is no reason to suppose that in the case of the multilateral nuclear force those guarantees would be more effective; rather they would be the opposite.

In order to shed further light on the approach of the western countries to the question of the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons, we deem it appropriate to recall the statement made by the representative of Canada on 30 July. The governments of the overwhelming majority of the countries of the world demand the blocking of access to nuclear weapons by other States. It is in this direction that the efforts of most of the delegations in our Committee are being exerted. Nevertheless, despite these demands Mr. Burns declared that -

"... it is desirable for the nations of Europe other than those which at present possess nuclear weapons to have some share in and more responsibility for providing a deterrent against ... threats ..." (ENDC/PV.203, p.39)

At the same meeting the United States representative, Mr. Timberlake, expressed his full agreement with that conclusion (ibid., p.51). In other words, in the opinion of the Western delegations it is desirable not to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons in any form but, on the contrary, to give the possibility of access to such weapons to other States which do not yet possess them. That that is indeed so is shown by yet another statement of the representative of Canada:

"We cannot freeze the present state of affairs, in which certain Powers possess this nuclear weapon which could destroy others, and keep all other nations in a state of nuclear powerlessness." (ibid., p.39)

Such statements have been made in direct connexion with -- and one may say, in defence of -- the plan to create a multilateral nuclear force. In our opinion it is hardly necessary to add anything to that. Such statements are bound to give the impression that, while our Committee is exerting every effort to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, the delegations of the Western countries are beginning to put forward more or less openly a concept which it is difficult to characterize otherwise than as preaching the inevitability of the further spread of nuclear weapons because, as they say, "we cannot freeze the present state of affairs."

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

If one considers the plan to create a multilateral nuclear force in the light of such arguments, one sees how well-founded and right is the position of the socialist countries to the effect that a multilateral nuclear force would constitute, even though it may be indirect, an equally dangerous way of disseminating nuclear weapons by reason of its consequences. It seems that Mr. Burns also realizes that the creation of a multilateral nuclear force would be fraught with serious consequences, as his words show:

"The Canadian delegation does not maintain that this is necessarily a desirable development; but it is designed as an alternative to the possible proliferation of national possession, which I think all those concerned would admit to be worse," (ibid.)

A multilateral nuclear force, as a measure which would lead to the dissemination of nuclear weapons in an indirect way, within the framework of NATO, is represented as a lesser evil than direct dissemination of nuclear weapons as a result of which those weapons would come under the direct national control of other NATO States and, in the first place, of the Federal Republic of Germany. But the delegations of the socialist countries have repeatedly pointed out that such hopes are futile. After all, it was the demand of the Federal Republic of Germany and nothing else that led to the elaboration of the plan to create a multilateral nuclear force. Moreover, numerous statements made by prominent West German leaders, which have already been cited here (ENDC/PV.207, pp.27, 28), leave no doubt that they consider the multilateral nuclear force to be only a first step, an intermediate stage in their striving to obtain complete control over nuclear weapons.

Thus the concessions made by the Western Powers in regard to a multilateral nuclear force can only lead to one result: namely, the gradual acquisition of nuclear weapons by the Federal Republic of Germany. This philosophy of concessions to the aggressive claims of West German imperialism is not new. It strikingly reminds us of the tragic situation in 1938, when such a policy of concession led to Munich and also to the gradual absorption of Czechoslovakia by Hitler's Germany and, in the end, to the Second World War. That historical precedent should serve as a serious warning, especially as in West Germany an ever-widening basis is being developed by precisely those forces whose policy led to the Munich Diktat and the outbreak of war -- forces which now more and more openly refer to Munich and demand a revision of the results of the Second World War.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

If the Western Powers are really seeking for an alternative which could prevent fulfilment of the hankering after the dissemination of nuclear weapons, such an alternative is self-evident. It consists in concluding an agreement on the consistent prohibition of the spread of nuclear weapons and in the strict observance of such an agreement, not to mention the proposals for a freeze of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a denuclearized zone in Central Europe and other proposals.

Those are the few remarks which the Czechoslovak delegation wished to submit in order to explain more fully its position in regard to the adoption of measures against the spread of nuclear weapons and the plan to create a multilateral nuclear force. In our opinion, the achievement of agreement on measures to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons is one of the most urgent and at the same time most realistic tasks of our Committee in the field of collateral measures. For this reason we consider that we must continue to give priority to the solution of this question, and not give up striving to find ways and means that would lead to the achievement of agreement.

Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): In accordance with the agreement that was reached, today's meeting of the Committee is being devoted to consideration of the General Assembly resolutions transmitted to the Committee concerning various aspects of the problem of disarmament (ENDC/139). In this connexion the Soviet delegation would like to put forward some considerations and comments.

Three of those General Assembly resolutions -- resolutions 1722 (XVI), 1767 (XVII) and 1908 (XVIII) -- relate to the negotiations which are being conducted in the Committee for the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. Those resolutions require us, acting in a spirit of mutual understanding and concession, to achieve with a sense of urgency an agreement on general and complete disarmament.

Although those resolutions were adopted unanimously by the General Assembly -- all the countries participating in the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee voted for them -- it has to be noted with regret that the Committee is still very far from having carried out the mandate of the United Nations General Assembly in regard to achieving agreement on general and complete disarmament. Three years ago, when the

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General Assembly first instructed the Eighteen-Nation Committee to begin negotiations on general and complete disarmament, hardly any of the sincere advocates of disarmament could have expected that years would go by and hundreds of meetings would be held, without any agreement being reached on a single one of the important aspects of the negotiations on general and complete disarmament. But that, to our great regret, is so, and we are now just as far from our goal as when the negotiations started. That is how matters actually stand today.

We have no intention at present of going into a detailed discussion of the reasons for the absence of progress in the negotiations on general and complete disarmament. That is the subject of our discussions at the Tuesday meetings; but we deem it necessary to stress quite definitely that it is not the Soviet Union and the socialist countries that bear the responsibility for the situation that has come about, for the actual deadlock in the negotiations on general and complete disarmament. During these negotiations there have been shown and continue to be shown on our part both a striving for mutual understanding and a readiness to make mutual concessions. We have submitted a number of constructive proposals on the problem of general and complete disarmament which go towards meeting the position of our colleagues.

Each time, however, these proposals have come up against the blank wall of the hard and rigid position of the States members of NATO, as a result of which it has been impossible to achieve agreement on a single one of the important items of the programme of general and complete disarmament, and above all, of course, on the question of eliminating nuclear weapon delivery vehicles. It is obvious that we cannot accept such an unsatisfactory situation in the matter of carrying out those resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. A fundamental, radical change must be made by the NATO Powers in their views on disarmament. Only such a change will open up possibilities of making progress in the negotiations on this most important problem of the present day, and open up ways for reaching agreement on general and complete disarmament.

Among the instructions given by the General Assembly to the Eighteen-Nation Committee an important place is assigned to the study of the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons (A/RES/1909(XVIII)). We have listened with great attention this morning to the statement made in this regard by the representative of Ethiopia, Iij Imru. In resolution 1909(XVIII) our Committee is requested to report on this subject to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly.



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As you know, the raising of the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons was the result of efforts made over many years by Ethiopia, which is a member of our Committee, and by other Afro-Asian countries. It should be stressed with particular satisfaction that in the struggle for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons Ethiopia has not been alone. It has been joined in the struggle by dozens of countries of Africa and Asia which have recently thrown off the shackles of colonialism and are vitally interested in the strengthening of peace. They are steadfastly endeavouring to ensure that the African and Asian continents should never become an arena of nuclear devastation. Ethiopia's initiative has been firmly supported by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries which are consistently pursuing a policy of peace, a policy aimed at eliminating the menace of nuclear war.

It was precisely because of the formation of such a wide association, which could be called a common front, of the peace-loving countries that it proved possible to achieve such a success as the adoption by the sixteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly of the Declaration on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. It is very significant that in this Declaration it is stated that the use of nuclear weapons is contrary to the spirit, letter and aims of the United Nations. It declares that:

"Any State using nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is to be considered as violating the Charter of the United Nations, as acting contrary to the laws of humanity and as committing a crime against mankind and civilization." (A/RES/1653 (XVI)).

That resolution of the General Assembly, I would remind the United Kingdom representative, is not at all a display of idealism. It expresses the determined will, the imperative demand of all the peoples of the world that the use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited. This demand should be respected and fulfilled, and its fulfilment should not be shirked by sticking on to this demand and on to the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on this subject the label of idealism, as the United Kingdom representative has done in his statement today.

The question before us now is that of giving the provisions of this Declaration, which has been approved by the overwhelming majority of States members of the United Nations, the binding legal force of a treaty through the conclusion of an appropriate

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international convention. It is obvious that now the States members of the Committee, in order to comply with the aforementioned resolution of the General Assembly, cannot limit themselves to statements of a general nature in support of the idea of prohibiting the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. This question was settled at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly, and now that is already a bygone stage. At present our Committee must deal with a very concrete question: namely, that of expressing its attitude towards the convening of a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons and submitting a report on this subject to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly.

On behalf of the Soviet Government, I wish to inform the Committee that the Soviet Union supports the proposal for the conclusion of an international convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons. We support this proposal because the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would be an important step forward towards solving the key problem of the present day -- the problem of eliminating the threat of nuclear war.

The conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would lead to a further relaxation of international tension and would be a great contribution towards strengthening confidence in relations among all States and -- what is especially important from the point of view of strengthening peace -- in the relations between the nuclear Powers. Such a convention would be in fact an international agreement on nuclear non-aggression, a reciprocal renunciation by the nuclear Powers of the use of nuclear weapons against each other or against any other State.

Of course we all realize that, in the absence of disarmament, a treaty alone on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons cannot in itself be considered a complete guarantee against the possibility of nuclear war, since States would still possess enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Everybody understands that in these conditions it would not be possible to preclude completely both the possibility of nuclear war being unleashed by an aggressor, and the possibility of nuclear weapons being used as a "last resort" by the side which found itself on the verge of defeat, say, in a war with the use of conventional weapons. All this is beyond dispute, and we should not give ourselves any illusions here in this regard.

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This was also mentioned by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, Mr. Khrushchev, in his talk with Lord Thomson, to which the United Kingdom representative has referred this morning. But, as reported by the Sunday Times (16 August 1964), in that talk Mr. Khrushchev also said something which the United Kingdom representative omitted to mention today: namely, that the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would really diminish the possibility of nuclear war breaking out. That is truly so, and for the following reasons.

First, it is logical to expect that the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would entail a definite slowing-down of the armaments race. Indeed, in the conditions that would be brought about in the world as a result of the signing of such a convention, nuclear weapons would not only be under a moral and political international ban, as was the case after the adoption by the General Assembly at its sixteenth session of the Declaration on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons (A/RES/1635(XVI)), but also under a legal ban in international law. In these conditions it would be very difficult for the government of any country to explain to its own people, let alone the peoples of other countries, its adoption of any measures aimed at further increasing nuclear armaments and the appropriations for such armaments and at further preparations for nuclear war.

Secondly, the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would undoubtedly reduce to a considerable extent the menace of the actual utilization of this weapon. Any aggressor would have to take into account in one way or another the fact that, in the event of his using nuclear weapons, he would be challenging not only the victim of his aggression but all countries of the world as well, and would inevitably find himself in the position of universal political isolation, not to mention other consequences of such an action.

Lastly, it must be emphasized that the conclusion of such a convention would in many respects prepare the way for the achievement of agreement on an essential solution to the question of the destruction of nuclear weapons, on general and complete disarmament. Once all States had declared that they would not use nuclear weapons, the physical elimination of those weapons, their complete removal from the arsenals of States, would be the logical next step. In these conditions it would also be easier to some extent for the people to crush the opposition of the opponents of disarmament and compel them to submit to the general will.

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Those are the considerations on the basis of which the Soviet Union supports the proposal for the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons. It goes without saying that the Soviet delegation fully supports the proposal made today by the representative of Ethiopia, Lij Imru, that the Committee should recommend to the nineteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly the convening of a conference for the signing of an international convention prohibiting the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. We are convinced that the conclusion of such a convention would be an excellent thing, and the Soviet Union is prepared to assume the relevant international obligations and strictly to abide by them, if, of course, similar obligations are assumed and complied with by the other side.

Among the instructions given to the Committee by the United Nations General Assembly, there is also another: the Committee is requested to continue its negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement banning underground nuclear tests as well (A/RES/1910(XVIII)). This, of course, is an important instruction. Everybody understands that the banning of underground nuclear tests, in addition to the banning of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, as provided for by the Moscow Treaty (ENDC/LOC/Rev.1), would block the way to the further improvement of nuclear weapons and thereby lead to a substantial restriction of the nuclear arms race and contribute towards improving the international situation. The Soviet Union is decisively in favour of prohibiting underground nuclear tests as speedily as possible. This can and must be done, especially as it is not difficult to do so, provided there is goodwill on the part of those States which are still testing nuclear weapons.

In the memorandum of the Government of the USSR on measures for slowing down the armaments race and relaxing international tension, it is stated that:

"Actual experience has fully confirmed that no special international control need be organized to detect underground tests any more than it is needed to detect tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water." (ENDC/123, p.6)

And indeed, the achievements of recent years in science and technology and in seismology, no matter what the representatives of the Western Powers may tell us here, testify that, with the help of existing national means of detection and

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identification of underground events, it is possible to pin-point all underground explosions, wherever they take place. This is acknowledged not only by Soviet scientists but also by many of the leading authorities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries. Consequently from the scientific and technical point of view there are no obstacles to the immediate conclusion of an agreement banning nuclear tests underground.

How, then, can we explain that the simple question of discontinuing underground nuclear tests is still unsolved? The only explanation is that its solution is of no interest to the United States, which for a number of years has been systematically carrying out underground tests for the purpose of further improving its nuclear weapons. That is the gist of the matter. And in order to camouflage its position, which in fact is a challenge to the nations that are striving to curb and end the nuclear arms race, the United States puts forward artificial, far-fetched and baseless arguments: for example, that if underground nuclear tests were prohibited it would be impossible to do without international control, on-site inspection, and so on. But all this is merely a pretext, an excuse and nothing else.

Where the Soviet Union is concerned, we have already stated on a number of occasions that the Soviet Government is prepared, even immediately, to conclude an agreement extending the prohibition of nuclear tests to tests carried out underground, under the same conditions as those laid down in the Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water: that is, without the establishment of international control but with the use of national means of detection for the verification of compliance with the agreement banning nuclear tests underground.

The question of concluding a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons, and the question of prohibiting underground nuclear tests, have a certain internal nexus. Both are steps towards solving the problem of reducing and completely eliminating the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war; both are interrelated as intermediate measures towards solving the problem of the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. The first steps in this direction, as we know, were the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, the achievement of agreement not to place in orbit objects carrying nuclear weapons (A/RES/1884(XVIII)), and the parallel actions

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of the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom in regard to reducing the production of fissionable materials for military purposes (ENDC/131, 132).

In this connexion we should like to remind the members of the Committee that on the Committee's agenda there are several other important questions directly connected with the task of curbing the armaments race which can also be regarded as preparatory steps facilitating a solution of the problem of eliminating nuclear weapons in the process of general and complete disarmament.

First of all, we deem it necessary to say a few words on the question of establishing denuclearized zones in various parts of the world. It is not difficult to see that the problem of establishing denuclearized zones is in essence very close to the problem of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons. Indeed, if the proposal to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons for military purposes has as its aim the adoption of political measures and the establishment of rules under international law aimed at preventing nuclear war altogether, the establishment of denuclearized zones has for its purpose the maximum territorial restriction of the area of a possible nuclear war, and consequently a diminution also of the possibility of its breaking out.

Agreements concluded in recent years have shown that such a restriction is quite practical and very desirable. The agreement of 1959 regarding Antarctica has completely excluded this huge area of the earth from the sphere of the dissemination of nuclear weapons. A year ago States were able to agree not to place in orbit objects carrying nuclear weapons, and thereby took a very important step towards, so to speak, converting the whole of outer space into a denuclearized zone.

But if it has been possible to conclude these agreements, and if States, as experience has shown, can successfully reach agreement to exclude a particular area from the sphere of nuclear war, then why should we limit ourselves to concluding agreements which are applicable only to those areas of the world where man is as yet a rare guest, and not a permanent inhabitant? Do the thickly-populated continents of Europe and Asia, Africa and Latin America deserve any less to be saved from the threat of nuclear destruction than, let us say, the icy wastes of Antarctica or the silent, unbounded regions of outer space?

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The peoples of all continents are clearly voicing their protest against preparations for a nuclear war, their unwillingness to become the victims of such a war, their anxiety to keep their homes away from the danger of a nuclear conflict. As early as the sixteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly a large group of countries of the continent of Africa put forward a proposal to convert that continent into a denuclearized zone (A/RES/1652(XVI)). At the conference of the Heads of African States, held in Addis Ababa in May 1963 (ENDC/93/Rev.1), and at the recently-concluded conference of the Organization of African Unity in Cairo, all African countries unanimously expressed themselves in favour of Africa becoming a denuclearized continent.

The Latin-American countries have also expressed their desire to free South and Central America from the nuclear menace (ENDC/87; A/RES/1911(XVIII)). The countries of the Near East and the States of South East Asia are showing great interest in the establishment of denuclearized zones in their part of the world. Algeria, the United Arab Republic and several other States are supporting proposals (ENDC/91,p.6) to convert the entire Mediterranean area into a denuclearized zone. In the Indian Ocean, Ceylon has shown constructive initiative by prohibiting the entry of foreign ships carrying nuclear weapons into its ports and the landing of foreign aircraft carrying nuclear weapons on its airfields.

More urgent than ever before is the question of creating denuclearized zones in Europe, where the powerful armed forces of NATO on the one hand, and of the Warsaw Treaty countries on the other, directly face each other, and where for this reason the danger of a possible outbreak of nuclear war is particularly great. Recognizing that danger, European countries have put forward a number of plans for the establishment of denuclearized zones in various parts of the European Continent.

There is, first of all, the proposal of the Polish People's Republic (ENDC/C.1/1) providing for the establishment of a denuclearized zone in Central Europe - that nerve centre where so much inflammable material has been accumulated that any spark could cause a nuclear conflagration. The same aim is pursued by another proposal of the Polish People's Republic to freeze nuclear armaments in Central Europe at their present level, at least at first (ENDC/PV.189,p.6). To reduce the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war in Central Europe, the German Democratic Republic has proposed that the two German States should renounce the manufacture, acquisition or use of nuclear weapons, and the stationing of these weapons in the territories of those States (ENDC/124).

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An important contribution in the struggle to improve the situation in Europe is the proposal of the Romanian People's Republic (ENDC/PV.168, pp.15, 16) and the Bulgarian People's Republic (ENDC/PV.176, p.23) to convert the Balkan area into a denuclearized zone -- an area which has been the centre of the outbreak of many military conflicts in past decades. The idea of creating a denuclearized zone in Northern Europe, initiated by the President of Finland, Mr. Kekkonen, is also gaining popularity. We all remember also the initiative of Sweden, which put forward the proposals known as the Unden Plan, aimed at limiting the sphere of dissemination of nuclear weapons (DC/201/Add.2, p.69).

Among the non-nuclear States there has long since taken shape a quite definite, sharply-negative attitude towards nuclear weapons which, as is evident from the facts we have mentioned, is being manifested more and more actively and decisively. Briefly, the position of the non-nuclear States in this regard is as follows.

If any of the nuclear Powers, or a military group allied to one of them, cannot decide to accept an agreement on disarmament and give up its nuclear weapons, but still holds on to them as a means of achieving its political aims, then that Power should keep its nuclear weapons in its own territory. In no way can the nuclear Powers trample on the will of the peoples of other continents and regions, who insist on and demand only one thing: namely, that the nuclear Powers should leave them in peace, that they should not bring their nuclear weapons into the territories of other countries and thereby expose the territories of those countries to a nuclear blow by the other nuclear side.

There cannot be two opinions regarding the fact that no one is entitled to oppose the clearly-expressed desire of nations to create denuclearized zones in their geographical areas. This is their legitimate right, and the Eighteen-Nation Committee should actively help to give effect to this right in the form of concrete international agreements. It is also the direct duty of the Committee to contribute towards the creation of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world, because the formation and official recognition of such zones under international law would also facilitate in many respects the negotiations on general and complete disarmament.

As for the Soviet Government, its position in regard to the creation of denuclearized zones has always been and continues to be a positive one. The Soviet Government attaches great importance to the creation of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world, and



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with particular urgency in the area where there is the greatest danger of an outbreak of nuclear conflict -- namely, in Central Europe. For its part, the Soviet Government has on several occasions solemnly declared its willingness to assume an obligation to respect the status of denuclearized zones, wherever and whenever they may be established, provided, of course, that similar obligations are assumed by the other nuclear Powers.

We appeal to the Western Powers to adopt the same position and thus make their contribution to the cause of freeing a great many countries and whole continents from the nuclear menace. It seems to us that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should help in the most active way towards solving this important problem by adopting a recommendation on the desirability of establishing denuclearized zones in various parts of the world, and especially where the menace of nuclear war is greatest.

An important step towards reducing the menace of war and limiting the material possibility of the outbreak and waging of war would undoubtedly be the implementation also of the Soviet Union's proposal for the elimination of bomber aircraft (ENDC/123, p.5). Recent events have shown with particular force and cogency the timeliness of this proposal of the Soviet Union. The Soviet delegation has already expounded in detail in the Committee its views on how it would be possible to approach in a practical way the elimination of bomber aircraft with due regard for the interests of the various States (ENDC/PV.199, pp.6 et seq.).

We sincerely wish to achieve an agreement on the elimination of bomber aircraft. We are prepared to carry on businesslike negotiations in this regard, and our position is a flexible one. Unfortunately, however, up to the present time we have not heard from the other side any positive answer to our proposal for the elimination of bomber aircraft. If the Western Powers would give us a positive reply, this would undoubtedly open up possibilities for achieving a first substantial agreement on the physical destruction of at least one type of armament intended for the waging of nuclear war.

Lastly, the question of preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons has a most direct bearing on the reduction of the possibility of an outbreak of nuclear conflict. At the last meeting but one the Soviet delegation once again set forth in detail its views regarding the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons and formulated concrete bases for a comprehensive agreement in this regard (ENDC/PV.207, pp.24 et seq.). At the same time the Soviet delegation once again drew attention to the danger inherent in the plan for

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the creation of a NATO multilateral nuclear force, and showed the complete invalidity of all the arguments by which the representatives of the Western Powers try to create the impression that it is possible to make compatible two completely incompatible things -- on the one hand the conclusion, in the interest of peace, of an agreement on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons, and on the other hand the implementation, in the interests of extending the preparations for nuclear war, of the plan to create a NATO multilateral nuclear force.

We have today touched on a number of measures for reducing the nuclear arms race which have been proposed and supported by various States -- from Ethiopia to Mexico, from Poland to Algeria. Some of these measures have been proposed by the Soviet Union. Some have been the subject of consideration at the General Assembly of the United Nations, and we in this Committee have been instructed to carry on this consideration to the end; others have been put forward for the first time directly in our Committee.

If we take all these measures together, it can be said without exaggeration that their execution would in many respects change the face of the world. Although in such a world States would still possess weapons, including nuclear weapons, nevertheless they would already have assumed a solemn obligation not to use nuclear weapons and thus would have outlawed them for good. It can also be said that adoption of these measures would put an end to the further improvement of nuclear weapons and their further dissemination. Large areas of the world and whole continents would be excluded from the sphere of dissemination of nuclear weapons. The process of the physical destruction of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles would begin. It would undoubtedly be a better world. It would be, so to speak, a world on the verge of general and complete disarmament.

It is beyond all doubt that all this could be accomplished in a very short time, even immediately. For this purpose what is needed is a real desire by all the parties concerned to put an end to the arms race, to reduce and eliminate the menace of nuclear war; it is necessary to have the will for real disarmament. For this purpose it is also necessary that States should abandon any plans and activities which, like the plan to create a NATO multilateral nuclear force, lead in the exactly opposite direction.

To sum up: on all these questions our side has submitted concrete proposals to the Committee. We can reach agreement on them at any time, as soon as the Western Powers -- and above all, of course, the United States -- wish to do so.

Mr. BURNS (Canada): The Canadian delegation welcomes the opportunity which this meeting provides to exchange views on the important question of the complete cessation of all nuclear weapon tests. In our opinion this discussion is overdue. It is understandable that the examination of new proposals for collateral measures, as well as our efforts to come to grips with the problem of the reduction of nuclear weapon vehicles, should have taken precedence over the subject of a comprehensive test ban. But, although that question has been referred to, it has not been discussed during the last two sessions of this Committee. The nations of the world expect this Committee to keep the subject under active consideration, and that expectation is set out in United Nations General Assembly resolution 1910 (XVIII) (ENDC/139), adopted in 1963.

When we commemorated the first anniversary of the signing of the partial test-ban Treaty (ENDC/PV.205), a number of delegations, including my own, recalled the preamble to that Treaty, in which the original parties stated their determination to continue negotiations "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time". (ENDC/100/Rev.1) It is to be regretted, my delegation feels, that, despite the favourable conditions created by the conclusion of the partial test ban, it has not been possible for the original parties during the past year to continue, through concrete negotiations either within or outside this Committee, to seek agreement on stopping underground tests.

In this Committee one hardly needs to emphasize why it remains so necessary to complete the good work already achieved in the partial ban by extending that agreement to cover tests in all environments. As Mr. Martin, the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, said in the General Assembly last year:

"The competition in and the development of new types of nuclear weapons cannot finally be ended until agreement on this matter is achieved." (A/C.1/PV.1313, p.16) For that reason, Mr. Martin, when he spoke to this Committee last March, included that item in the list of measures on which he urged the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee to concentrate (ENDC/PV.178, p.16).

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

We all recognize that one of the most direct and effective routes to halting the refinement of nuclear weapons lies in the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban. As long as nuclear weapon tests are carried out in any environment, the partial test ban rests on insecure foundations. As long as underground tests are allowed to continue, it will be difficult to combat the pressures which may build up in other countries that may see in those tests a threat to their own security. In the absence of a total ban there is a constant danger that nuclear tests in all environments may be resumed and carried out by Powers other than those at present in the "nuclear club".

For all those reasons, my delegation believes that a concerted and early effort should be made by the nuclear Powers represented in this Committee to resume detailed negotiations aimed at an agreement to halt all tests everywhere.

From the statements we have heard from the representatives of the nuclear Powers it is unfortunately apparent that so far there has been no significant modification in the position of either side with respect to the guarantees and methods of verification required for a reliable treaty banning underground tests. The current deadlock will not be solved simply by waiting. We all know that the partial test ban followed years of intensive negotiations. It is our conviction that an agreement on stopping underground tests must be preceded by a period of intensive efforts -- it need take only months, not years -- on the political and technical levels.

During the past year the work of scientists has increased our knowledge in the field of seismology, as the representative of the Soviet Union has remarked. We believe that a meeting of experts, which has been advocated so often by the West and by non-aligned countries, should take place, a meeting in which the most recent scientific data on the subject could be weighed carefully. Those experts could also appropriately consider the validity of certain suggestions which have been advanced by non-aligned members concerning possible steps to be taken towards a comprehensive treaty.

A detailed re-examination of all the relevant scientific facts would, we are sure, contribute to overcoming the differences which separate the positions of the two sides. The 1958 meeting of scientists here in Geneva began the process which resulted in the signing of the test-ban Treaty last year. After all, there is no difference in principle involved regarding the ultimate objective of negotiation in that area. Both sides are firmly on record in favour of a complete ban. What

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

remains to be settled is the conditions under which that ban is to be given effect, and the verification procedures which are required in order that all can have confidence that a complete ban is being faithfully observed. The Canadian delegation once again urges the early resumption of detailed negotiations to that end.

I turn now to General Assembly resolution 1909 (XVIII) (ENDC/139), which contains the Assembly's request that:

"... the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament ... study

... the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a

convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons ...".

It seems clear from what has been said here today that there is a significant difference of opinion about the value of such a proposal. Incidentally, when reading the reports of the latest Pugwash Conference, held at Udaipur, India, last January, I noted that this subject had been discussed. There was a divergence of opinion there also, and that Conference was unable to state any positive conclusion.

We listened with great attention to the important statement made by the representative of Ethiopia this morning, and we must say that we are in sympathy with much of what he said. Canada has always sympathized with the motives of the sponsors of this measure and their desire to put an end to the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in war. We appreciate their sentiments and we respect their concern. The people of the world should not be subjected to the dreadful death and destruction which the use of such weapons would cause. However, in the light of past experience and present circumstances we cannot but doubt that the method which has been suggested is likely to be effective.

The Canadian view has always been that declarations such as the one called for in the present instance are unlikely to produce any useful results and could even give rise to a dangerous sense of false security. History has all too often shown that in a crisis, when a nation considers that its vital interests are in jeopardy, it will make use of whatever means are available to protect them despite any previous commitment to the contrary. One has only to look at previous declarations prohibiting the use of specific types of weapons to see how little value they have had when put to the test in wartime. Without exception, every one has been violated; and we can see no reason to believe that the same would not be the case regarding a declaration against the use of nuclear weapons. As has already been pointed out here this morning, Mr. Khrushchev himself has publicly expressed his

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

doubts about the value of such a declaration on several occasions, and in the view of the Canadian delegation his approach is eminently realistic.

We listened to what the representative of Czechoslovakia, our Chairman for today, had to say on this point in his statement, and we noted particularly that some of the advantages of such a convention would be that there would be no disturbance of the balance of force, no change in the existence or production of further nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon vehicles, and of course no problems of control, which always seems a great advantage to the delegations from Eastern Europe. It does not seem to the Canadian delegation that it would be very logical to declare that there was to be a prohibition against the use of nuclear weapons and yet to continue to pile them up and to keep those which existed.

It is true that the representative of the Soviet Union said hopefully that the signing of such a convention would probably induce nations not to produce these weapons in such great numbers as at present; but we have noticed that there has been no response to the proposals advanced by the President of the United States for a freeze of the production of nuclear weapons, the fissionable materials for their production, or the most dangerous kinds of nuclear weapon vehicles (ENDC/120). These steps would represent something positive and concrete as regards stopping the arms race; but they are passed over, apparently, in favour of a convention. In other words, words seem to be more favoured than actions.

Apart from any doubts which one might have about the value of voluntary declarations, I think everyone will agree that circumstances have altered significantly since the suggestion for such a convention was put forward in 1961 -- that is, the date of the resolution we are discussing. I think everyone will agree that at that time there was no machinery for attacking systematically the question of disarmament, and the representatives of many countries, in their anxiety to do something about the problem, were casting around for any avenue which seemed to hold some promise of success. Since then, however, this Conference has come into being, and we have had the benefit of several years of detailed disarmament negotiations. While we have not made the progress we might have wished for, a formula for coming to grips with the problem has been evolved. We can now say with a great deal more confidence than in 1961 what is required and what appears to be the best way of achieving it.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

In the Canadian view, the only way to prevent the use of nuclear weapons in wartime is to work out arrangements for their reduction and eventual elimination. All of us around this table appreciate only too well that this will not be easy; but we should be deluding ourselves and making our task more difficult if we were to lend support to the suggestion that this vital question can be dealt with effectively by a simple statement of good intentions. In our opinion, any action to assemble a world conference to sign a convention prohibiting nuclear weapons could very well detract from our efforts to negotiate a binding disarmament agreement, which is the only effective method of dealing with the threat of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman, in your statement you made some comments on what I said at a previous meeting, and I reserve the right to reply to them at a future meeting after I have had an opportunity of reading the verbatim record.

Mr. LUKANOV (Bulgaria) (translation from Russian): Men of good will throughout the world have expressed their conviction, as the representative of the Soviet Union has done today in the meeting-room of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, that the international situation would now be without any tension if the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly relating to our work had been carried out.

As the Committee knows, it was expected above all that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would report as early as 1962 that it had prepared a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament, or at least that it had made considerable progress towards the preparation of such a treaty. It was also expected that, in compliance with the intention of the General Assembly, the Committee would submit agreements on a number of collateral measures aimed at eliminating or reducing international tension. It is beyond all doubt that the implementation of the aforesaid instructions of the United Nations would change the whole international situation in favour of the peaceful coexistence of States. In this regard the implementation of the resolutions concerning nuclear disarmament would be of decisive significance.

It is with one of those resolutions that the Bulgarian delegation wishes to deal in greater detail. We have in mind resolution 1909(XVIII) of 27 November 1963 (ENDC/139), which we were to study "urgently". As we know, under that resolution our Committee has to submit to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session a report on the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

I must say first of all that the Bulgarian delegation is in agreement with all the considerations and conclusions that have been put forward today by the representative of Ethiopia, Lij Imru, regarding the aforesaid resolution.

The position of the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in regard to the desirability and necessity of convening an international conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons was expressed in the reply of our Government (A/5174, Annex II, p.9) to the questionnaire sent out by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in pursuance of resolution 1653 (XVI). The position of the Bulgarian Government is also reflected in the full support given by the Bulgarian delegation in the United Nations to the initiative taken by Ethiopia and a number of other Afro-Asian States during the sixteenth session of the General Assembly.

We welcomed that initiative, taking into account the particular importance of the adoption by the United Nations of a clear and definite position on the question of "outlawing" nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. Just as we did at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly, now also we consider that there should be complete unanimity of opinion on this question. The declaration adopted at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly should in the very near future take the form of an international convention to which all States would adhere.

It is common knowledge that resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations are only recommendations which are not mandatory for the States Members of the United Nations. It is self-evident that a recommendation to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons can be converted into an international convention and become an integral part of present-day international law only if, in the first place, all the nuclear Powers show that they are prepared to sign such a convention -- that is, to assume in the eyes of the whole world a solemn obligation to renounce the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.

Judging by the attitude which the Western Powers have hitherto adopted, and at today's meeting of the Committee, towards the initiative taken by Ethiopia and a number of other Afro-Asian countries, our Committee will not be able to carry out the task assigned to it unless the Western Powers re-consider their positions on a question which justifiably causes concern to all the peoples and the whole of world public opinion: namely, the question of prohibiting the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons -- those weapons of mass destruction the use of which, as is generally recognized, has no equal as regards its inhuman character and its terrible consequences for mankind.



(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

Frankly speaking, the considerations and arguments which were used by some delegations at the sixteenth and eighteenth sessions of the General Assembly - and which, as we see, are still being used -- to justify their negative position in regard to the initiative of Ethiopia do not stand up to any criticism. It is impossible to regard as valid such arguments as, for example, that the United Nations Charter, in recognizing the right of individual or collective self-defence, practically implies recognition of the "right" -- for the purpose of "self-defence" -- to use nuclear weapons.

It is not difficult to realize what dangerous consequences such legalization of the use of nuclear weapons could have for the cause of peace. The lessons of the recent past are still fresh in the memories of the peoples. Hitler occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia and attacked Poland and the Soviet Union, alleging that he did so in legitimate "self-defence". Present-day international relations likewise abound in examples of a peculiar interpretation of the United Nations Charter; and there have been many a foreign intervention, use of force or threat to use force for which the aggressors have found justification in theories and definitions of the concept of "aggression" that were exceedingly dubious from the point of view of international law. It is high time indeed to abandon such "arguments". In any case, it is to be hoped that such interpretations of the provisions of the United Nations Charter will find no place here in the Eighteen-Nation Committee, because it is more than evident that they have nothing in common with the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter.

It seems even more difficult to understand the arguments to the effect that a possible international agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons might prove to be -- save the mark! -- harmful to the cause of peace and might even hamper the efforts aimed at solving the problem of disarmament and, in particular, the problem of the definitive prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. No one, of course, will assert that the moral condemnation of the use of weapons of mass destruction and the assumption of an obligation not to use such weapons in the event of a conflict suffice in themselves to solve in a radical way the problem of eliminating the menace of a thermonuclear war. It is quite obvious that this problem can be solved and will be solved only when weapons of mass destruction cease to exist.

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

The position of the socialist countries in this respect is well known to the members of the Committee. For instance, the socialist countries have never had any fear of "overloading" in the initial stages of the programme of general and complete disarmament; they have never considered that the implementation of radical measures in the field of nuclear weapons should necessarily be delayed until the end of the third stage of disarmament. At the same time, they have always been firmly convinced that the adoption of a clear and unequivocally negative attitude in regard to weapons of mass destruction is of great importance for solving the problem of disarmament in the right way. That is why they have always considered that every step, every agreement reflecting a clear and negative attitude of principle in regard to weapons of mass destruction in general, and nuclear weapons in particular, could only serve the cause of peace and help towards solving the problem of the complete prohibition and definitive elimination of such weapons.

The delegations of the Western countries have repeatedly tried to persuade us that even "the most modest measures" that would lead the Committee to an agreement would help and facilitate our work. Our Western colleagues advise us to be especially careful when considering and solving nuclear disarmament problems, and warn us against "hasty" measures. However, as soon as the question of "outlawing" nuclear weapons comes up for discussion they manifest an extraordinary maximalism.

At one of our recent meetings the United States representative expressed the opinion that the achievement of an agreement to eliminate-- over a period of two years -- obsolete and, in fact, discarded bomber aircraft would be "an historic moment" (ENDC/PV.199, p.16). At the same time, the Western Powers consider the achievement of an agreement on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons on the basis of an international convention not only useless but even harmful, since they consider that such a convention in itself would not be a measure that would help towards relieving international tension or strengthening confidence among States-- that is, a measure that could make it easier to find a solution to the problem of disarmament.

When, during the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, a draft resolution submitted by Ethiopia was under discussion in the First Committee, the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Tahourdin, stated:

(Mr. Lukancov, Bulgaria)

"... my Government considers that the existence of an unenforceable prohibition on the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons would not in fact contribute to international security ...

"... my Government regards as wholly unrealistic any suggestion that a convention dealing with nuclear and thermonuclear weapons could be effective so long as these weapons exist". (A/C.1/PV.1340, pp.44-45, 46)

In essence Mr. Takourdin has today reiterated that position of his Government.

The United Nations resolution which we are now discussing (A/RES/1909(XVIII); ENDC/139) does not claim to offer a cardinal solution to the problem of eliminating the menace of a thermonuclear war. But if the proposal contained in it were carried out -- that is, if the prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons were to become a rule of international law -- this would unquestionably be an important step towards the prohibition and elimination of such weapons. The United Kingdom took part in the negotiations on the partial prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. It signed the Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) and adhered to the declaration concerning the non-use of outer space for military purposes (A/RES/1884(XVIII); ENDC/117) and, as we know, it does not regard those agreements as "unrealistic" or "illusory". Moreover, the great importance of those agreements is not denied by the United Kingdom Government despite the generally-recognized fact that by themselves they cannot free humanity from the menace of a thermonuclear war.

The delegations of the Western Powers often insist that we should concentrate on certain measures aimed at eliminating the risk of war "by accident". The risk of such a war certainly exists, and will continue to exist so long as there are modern weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. But in the present international situation, and given the presence of these weapons in the arsenals of States, the problem is above all to eliminate the risk and danger of a deliberate unleashing of war. It is no secret, for instance, that in the West the "theories" of a so-called "preventive nuclear war" and of the advantages of a "first nuclear strike" have their advocates even today.

In these circumstances, would not an international convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons constitute a serious, a very serious, obstacle to plans -- present or future based on such dangerous theories? Would not an international convention declaring the use of nuclear weapons to be a crime against humanity constitute a serious, a very serious,

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

obstacle to the propaganda in world public opinion in favour of the theory of the inevitability of a thermonuclear conflict and the "theory" of the necessity of improving nuclear missiles, which are allegedly the best guarantee of national security -- that is, theories which in fact encourage the continuance of the arms race?

Would not an international convention which declared the use of nuclear weapons to be an act contrary to the rules of international law and the "laws of humanity" make inadmissible -- and altogether pointless, even in a pre-election campaign -- any discussion of whether or not the use of nuclear weapons against this or that Power was envisaged, or whether there was unanimity of views in this regard among the most responsible political leaders?

A declaration "outlawing" nuclear weapons will not free mankind from the menace of a thermonuclear war; but an international convention prohibiting the use of such weapons will help the peoples of the world to free themselves more quickly from the influence of the protagonists of "crusades" and the advocates of "punitive expeditions" which could plunge the world into a thermonuclear catastrophe.

It is definitely impossible for the Eighteen-Nation Committee to take in regard to General Assembly resolution 1653(XVI) an attitude which would be a negation and complete disregard of the moral and legal obligations assumed by States on the basis of international conventions. Lack of faith in the value of international agreements or in the obligations assumed by States is completely unjustified. Historical experience testifies that obligations similar to those laid down in that declaration on the prohibition of nuclear weapons adopted at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly played a considerable restraining role and prevented the use during the Second World War of chemical and bacteriological weapons, which were prohibited by the Geneva Protocols of 1925.

Every treaty freely concluded by sovereign States is based on the presumption that it will be observed. It must be assumed that no State signs and ratifies a treaty of its own accord with the premeditated intention of infringing it. Obviously it is not possible to include in an international treaty such a provision as would absolutely guarantee its observance. But, in the final analysis, the first and most reliable guarantee of a treaty is world public opinion, respect for international law, moral principles and the pledged word.

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

If the opinion were held that we should refuse completely to rely on mutual good faith, States would not be able to conclude treaties freely among themselves. There would only remain treaties dictated to the vanquished by the victor.

Therefore it should be considered that if in the past States succeeded in preventing the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons, it is all the more necessary to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, which would doom hundreds of millions of people to annihilation. A convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would play a highly positive role as a means of restraining the appetite of any potential aggressor and as an obstacle to the use of weapons of mass destruction.

Nor can we overlook the importance which the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would have for the solution of the problem of the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons with which we are concerned. It is obvious that the hankering to manufacture, acquire or possess such weapons would lose all sense, and those who are now stretching out their hands towards nuclear weapons would be condemned in advance by world public opinion and by the community of States.

For many years now all sober-minded people have been warning world public opinion and explaining the terrible consequences that the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons would entail for the peoples - weapons which if used, would be directed not only against some adversary but against all peoples, including to any equal extent those who were not taking part in hostilities. All this is indisputable, and we have already heard on several occasions at our meetings statements testifying to the sincere concern of many statesmen and political and social leaders, as well as prominent scientists, who obviously have an exact idea of the danger threatening all if it is not removed in time.

The discussions at the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth sessions of the General Assembly, and the replies of governments to the resolutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the General Assembly, show that the overwhelming majority of States approve the idea that it is essential to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. The overwhelming majority of States support the proposal to convene a conference for the purpose of signing an international convention. The majority of States consider that the signature of such a convention would be an important contribution to the struggle of the peoples for the definitive prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

The Eighteen-Nation Committee is bound to heed, and cannot take the liberty of disregarding, this so clearly-expressed attitude of the General Assembly and of the majority of the countries Members of the United Nations in regard to this question. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations summing up the results of the inquiry undertaken in pursuance of resolution 1653(XVI), the replies from States -

"... reflect the concern of the Members of the United Nations to continue the search for acceptable means of eliminating the possible use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons." (A/5174, p.2)

The discussions at the eighteenth session and the adoption of resolution 1909(XVIII) (ENDC/139) show that an ever-increasing number of Powers and governments share this concern and this desire.

The Bulgarian delegation is of the opinion that our Committee will not be fulfilling its duty if it fails to express just as clearly and unambiguously its attitude in regard to the problem of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons as was done in the declaration adopted at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly. The Committee should report to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly that this problem has been carefully considered and that the Committee deems it necessary to reaffirm that the convening of a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is desirable and necessary. After such a decision of the Eighteen-Nation Committee it will be left to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly to discuss and decide the most suitable date for convening an international conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.

Mr. GOMEZ ROBLEDO (Mexico) (translation from Spanish): I regret having to take the floor at this late hour, but the delegation of Mexico has been requested by the other seven non-aligned countries to deal with a point of procedure which at this juncture we consider urgent. I apologize to my colleagues and shall be very brief.

Resolution 1908(XVIII) states:

"The General Assembly:

"Conscious of its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for disarmament and the consolidation of peace"...

"Requests the Eighteen-Nation Committee to submit to the General Assembly an interim report on the progress of its work at an early appropriate date, and a comprehensive report not later than 1 September 1964;..." (ENDC/139)

(Mr. Gomez Robledo, Mexico)

For the same reason and following the same line of argument, the General Assembly in resolution 1909(XVIII) (ibid.), requesting this Committee to submit a report on the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, stated that that report should be submitted to the General Assembly "at its nineteenth session".

Furthermore, in resolution 1910(XVIII),(ibid.) concerning the "urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests", the General Assembly referred to the same problem and requested this Committee to report to it on the progress of its work "at the earliest possible date and, in any event, not later than at the nineteenth session ...".

From all this it appears, in the opinion of my delegation, that the General Assembly takes a profound interest in the negotiations carried on by our Committee and wishes to be informed of their results; but in no case has the General Assembly wished to lay down any obstacles or limitations to the discussions that are taking place here. On the other hand, when resolution 1908(XVIII) was adopted it could not be foreseen that the General Assembly would begin its nineteenth session later than the usual date.

For these reasons, the seven other delegations of the non-aligned countries participating in the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, being aware that the duty to fulfil the General Assembly's instructions rests upon all of us equally, have instructed the delegation of Mexico to propose to the Committee that the comprehensive report requested by the General Assembly on the question of general and complete disarmament should cover not only the negotiations up to 1 September 1964 but also the negotiations that will be carried on until the suspension of the work of the present session.

The eight non-aligned delegations trust that this proposal will be supported by all the delegations represented here, since its aim is to find a practical solution which is in no way contrary to the spirit in which the General Assembly requested the necessary information to enable it at its next session to continue the study of the problems relating to disarmament and the consolidation of peace.

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): I am grateful to the representative of Mexico for his speech and proposal. The Committee has heard the proposal, and I ask representatives to speak on it if they so desire.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

If there are no comments, the Mexican proposal submitted on behalf of all the eight non-aligned States may be considered to be adopted by the Committee for the drafting of the report to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): If no one wishes to speak, I will venture to read to you a communication which the Chair has received from one of our co-Chairmen, the representative of the United States.

(continued in English)

"The United States delegation, in accordance with the amended procedure of work adopted at our 205th meeting,<sup>1/</sup> wishes to suggest to the Committee that the topic for discussion at the plenary meeting on Thursday, 27 August 1964, should be the verified freeze of strategic nuclear offensive and defensive vehicles, as proposed in document ENDC/120."

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 209th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Milan Klusak, representative of Czechoslovakia.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Canada, Bulgaria and Mexico.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 25 August 1964, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

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<sup>1/</sup> ENDC/PV.205, pp.34, 35.